



PAVEE POINT
TRAVELLER AND ROMA CENTRE

Roma Holocaust Memorial 2017

Testimony – Stelian Ciuciu

Stelian lives in Dublin and kindly shared his story with us – we thank him for his generosity in sharing a difficult past in order to make the future better.

This is the testimony given by Stelian:

My father lived in Mehedinti in Romanai, in a village where more Roma lived. Close to thirty Roma from my family were transported to Transnistria. At the Russian boarder they were stripped of all belongings leaving them with nothing. The stories my father used to tell us are hard to talk about. Stories of dead children and adults lying in ditches, of people being beaten and raped, people dying from starvation or disease without a drop of hope, of people who had been shot for a piece of bread and of people who became monsters.

When they returned from Transnistria there were only six people left from thirty which was a great loss.

A lot was talked about around the evening fire when the elders would tell us what they had to endure. We, the younger ones, were always advised to be proud of who we are and to not allow others to destroy us like they have tried in the past. I find myself trying to talk a lot with my children about what happened. Today I think that discrimination against Roma in Europe grows by the day and we don't know what is going to happen with us. I think people today are living with an indescribable fear where they cannot find a decent job without hiding that they are Roma and this scares me.

Our girls are choosing to no longer wear long skirts and carry the tradition because of discrimination, which means we lose all the little values and tradition left. We lose family as we choose to emigrate to other countries for a better living, but we lose contact. Our elders remain in the countries where we are from and so we lose our roots. The Holocaust changed the course of our lives, it tore apart generations of people who were simply forgotten. I think that no one can ever pay for what the Roma people have had to endure.